1:Dobrizhoffer M-5 (ca. 1760) 1822
S14 Abipon S14



tively whence the Abipones formerly came, I will at any rate tell you where they now inhabit. That vast extent of country bounded from north to south by the Rio Grande, or Iñatè, and the territories of Sta. Fè, and from east to west by the shores of the Paraguay, and the country of St. Iago, is the residence of the Abipones, who are distributed into various hordes. Impatient of agriculture and a fixed home, they are continually moving from place to place. The opportunity of water and provisions at one time, and the necessity of avoiding the approach of the enemy at another, obliges them to be constantly on the move. The Abipones imitate skilful chess-players. After committing slaughter in the southern colonies of the Spaniards, they retire far northwards, afflict the city of Asumpcion with murders and rapine, and then hurry back again to the south. If they have acted hostilities against the towns of the Guaranies, or the city of Corrientes, they betake themselves to the west. But if the territories of St. Iago or Cordoba have been the objects of their fury, they cunningly conceal themselves in the marshes, islands, and reedy places of the river Parana. For the Spaniards, however desirous, are not able to return the injuries of the savages, from the difficulty of the

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to those that are in need. Under the earth, and even under the water, grow esculent roots. Two species of the alfaroba, commonly called St. John's bread, throughout great part of the year, produce extremely wholesome, and by no means unsavoury food, both meat and drink. See the munificence of God even towards those by whom he is not worshipped! Behold a rude image of the golden age! The Abipones have it in their power to procure all the appurtenances of daily life, with little or no labour, and though unacquainted with money of every kind, are commodiously supplied with all necessaries; for if a long drought have exhausted the rivers, they will find water even in the most desert plains, under the leaves of the caraquatà, or they can suck little apples, which are full of a watery liquor like melons, and grow under the earth, or dig a well in the channel of a dried-up river, and see water sufficient for themselves and their horses spring up from thence. A Spaniard, in the wilds of America, will pine with thirst, either from being ignorant of these things, or impatient of the labour of obtaining them.

As the supports of life are not all found collected together in one place, nor will suffice for a long time, or a great number of hordesmen, the Abipones are obliged to change their residence, and travel about continually.

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SI4 Abipon SI4



like an acorn, is applied to the bole of the softer, and whirled quickly round with both hands. By this mutual and quick attrition of both woods, a little dust is rubbed off which at the same moment catches fire and emits smoke; to this the Indians apply straw, cow-dung, dry leaves, &c. for fuel. The soft wood used for this purpose is taken either from the tree ambaÿ, from the shrub caraquatà, or from the cedar; but the harder, which they whirl round with the hand, comes from the tree tataÿi, which affords a saffron-coloured wood, as hard as box, and fit for dying clothes yellow, together with mulberries very like those of our own country.

Whenever they think fit to sleep at noon, or pass the night by the way, they anxiously look out for some place affording an opportunity of water, wood, and pasture. If there arise any suspicion of a hostile ambuscade, they hide themselves in lurking holes, rendered inaccessible by the nature of the place. You would say that they and their families are at home, wherever they go, for they carry about mats to serve for a house, as a snail does its shell. Two poles are fixed into the ground, and to them is tied a mat, twice or thrice folded to exclude the wind and rain. That the ground upon which they lie may not be wetted by a heavy shower, they providently dig a little channel at the side

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164 tian ague is very prevalent in many Spanish towns, especially in Tucuman. In the colony
164 of Concepcion, on the banks of the river Ines-
312 pin, which supplied the inhabitants with sweet
361 and very wholesome water, no person was ever seized with the tertian ague. In the colonies of St. Ferdinand and the Rosary, which were surrounded with marshes and lakes, the Abipones were destitute of river water, and conse-
164 quently hardly ever free from agues. In the colony of the Rosary the fever prevailed so much for the space of some months, that no one escaped it, not even myself, though at other times secure amidst persons infected with
[797] this disorder. That none of the savages might die suddenly without receiving baptism, I daily visited all the sick, and at length caught the quotidian ague, though the Indians only laboured under the tertian. The fever daily increased at sun-set, and did not leave me till morning. This feverish agitation, at the end of seven and twenty days, was succeeded by the tertian, after two fits of which I happily recovered. What I suffered, in my utter want of all necessaries, and what danger I underwent, need not be told here.

000 Just as I am about to conclude my discourse on contagious disorders, a circumstance occurs to my mind worthy the critical examination of